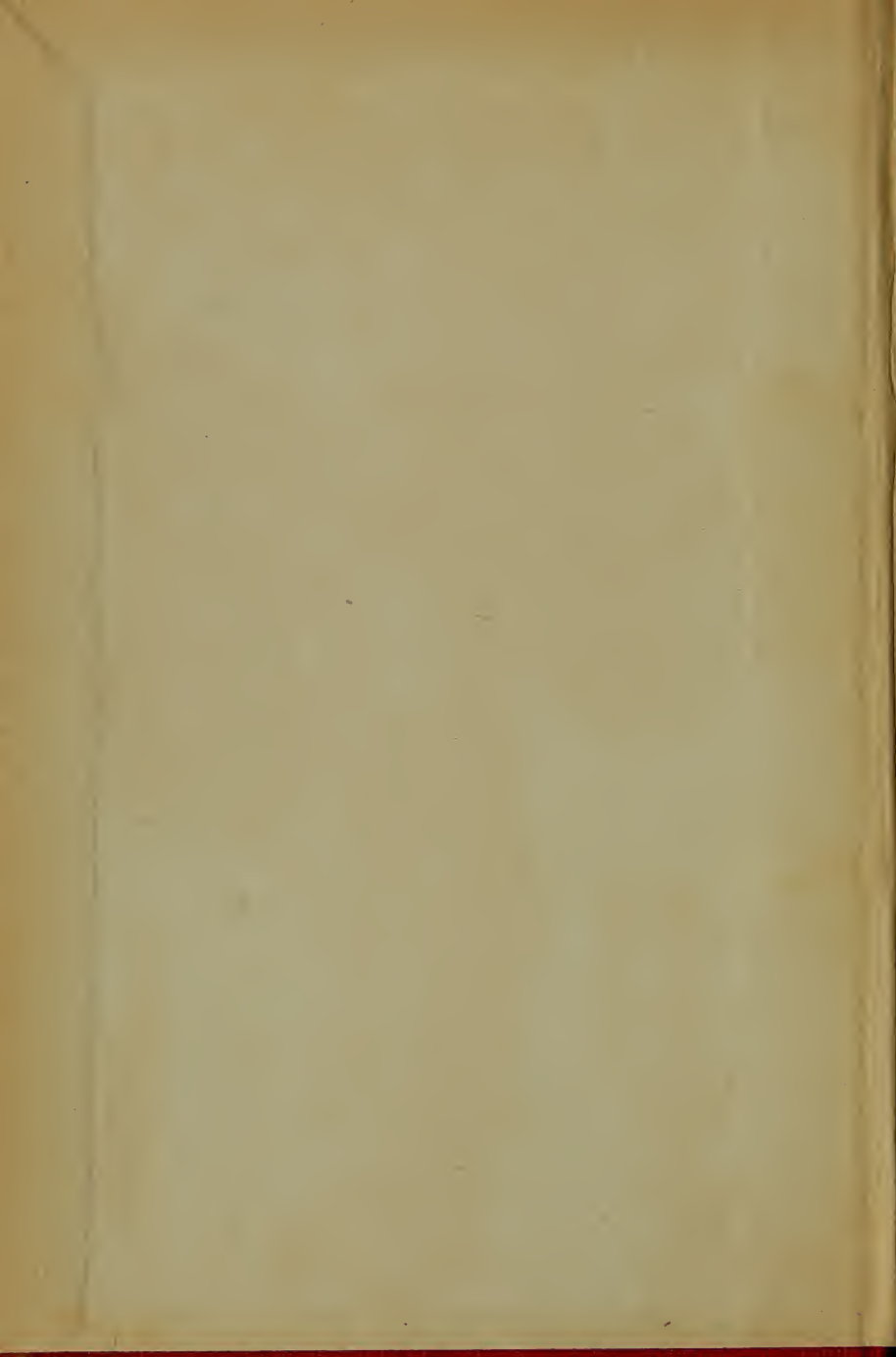




The LINK



March 1955

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*Photo credits: front cover, Grace Line, courtesy Pan American Union;
back cover, Glenn Burgess; page 20, Washington Zoological Park;
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SUBSCRIPTION PRICES TO CIVILIANS: \$2.00 a year; \$1.50 a year in lots of ten or more to one address.

FOR CHAPLAINS: Bulk orders to bases for free distribution to personnel are invoiced quarterly at the rate of 10¢ per copy. Special options are open to chaplains whose funds do not allow payment of this cost.

PUBLISHED monthly by The General Commission on Chaplains at 815 Demonbreun St., Nashville 3, Tenn. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, Nashville, Tenn., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE to the Editor at 122 Maryland Ave., NE., Washington 2 D.C.

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1955

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"My maladies and I are friends," said Francis Parkman,
who overcame ill health to become a great historian

Invincible Invalid

Matthew J. Quinn

The Reverend Mr. Francis Parkman peered out through his study window one New England autumn in 1833, watching a group of boys playing "Indians" on the Parkman estate. One of the boys, distinguished from his older companions by the frailness of his build, was making a determined but exhausting effort to match the energy and feats of the others. Uttering war cries and slapping his hip as he urged his imaginary pony to greater speed, he trailed behind his fellow warriors. The leader then headed for a small brook and jumped across it without hesitation, signaling his band to follow. One by one the boys cleared the brook, until it came the youngest one's turn. Panting, his slight frame trembling with excitement, he made a mighty effort and landed with a splash in the water.

"Francis!"

The minister's voice, filled with overtones of reproach, stilled the activity of the youngsters. The fallen Indian limped out of the brook, crestfallen at his failure.

"Coming, sir," he said. Waving goodbye to his playmates, he

walked toward the house. Entering, he met his father's disapproving gaze.

"Francis," the gentleman said sadly, "when will you learn that you cannot exert yourself like other boys? You know what the doctor said about your health?"

A look of desperation appeared on the thin, youthful face. "I know, Dad, but you know how I love to play Indians."

"Your play must be suited to your physical limitations, son."

"Dad, the Indians hardened their bodies with exercise."

The father smiled and laid an arm around his son's narrow shoulders.

"You are not an Indian, Francis, but a white boy—a very delicate white boy. Now upstairs with you and change that wet clothing instantly!"

Young Francis Parkman nodded obediently and headed for his room. His father returned to the window frowning thoughtfully as he considered his only son. From birth the boy had been sickly, his weak nerves and constitution breaking under the slightest strain. Doctors had assured the

parents that the boy's grip on life would always be tenuous, and that a sheltered life would be mandatory. But there was one consolation to the gloomy picture. The Parkman fortune, one of the largest in Boston, would sustain the boy, making any hard or even regular work unnecessary. The Reverend Mr. Parkman smiled as he considered his son's pathetic interest in the strenuous life and the American Indian. In his play, young Francis had managed to add a touch of realism to his Indian games. While his playmates were content to let a chicken feather, tied to the head with a bit of string, symbolize the red man, Francis had dyed the feathers and carefully bound and arranged them into colorful headpieces.

But, the father reminded himself, this was but a passing phase of childhood. His son, his sickly body reclined on the family fortune, would grow into a life of gentle leisure, and these youthful obsessions would be forgotten. So completely did this father fail to understand his boy's temperament.

For, whether in school or at play, Francis Parkman was fascinated by the story of the American Indian. Despite his weak eyes, easily tired and inflamed by reading, he loved books, and early in life fell in love with words. Arithmetic, elementary botany, and Biblical studies were interesting enough. But it was history that enthralled him; especially the history of what was then the American wilderness and its heroic, copper-skinned natives. He read and reread James Fenimore

Cooper's portrayals of Indian life. Later, he was to recall his shock and disappointment at the discovery that the characters of *The Deerslayer* had never lived, but were fictitious. Uncas, Hardheart, and Chingachgook were but figments of Mr. Cooper's imagination! Thus even in early youth he noticed how little factual information existed on the American Indian. The historical sections of libraries were filled with the stories of Rome, the Renaissance, the cultures and glories of the past. But what of the battle for North America? He could find little on the subject and that little was uninspired, poorly documented, and mediocre in style. It was then he resolved to prepare himself for the task of unearthing and recording the story of North America.

But realism forced him to consider the severe limitations which nature had placed upon him. His health, his "wretched imitation of a body," as he put it, was his great obstacle. He was woefully lacking in energy and seemed fair prey to every ache and pain. His weak eyes failed under the demands of his studies, until the words before him would dance crazily through a mist of tears. His poor health forced him to stay away from school for days and weeks at a time. Nevertheless, he managed to finish high school in the allotted period. Then came enrollment in Harvard, and the study of law. He dutifully pursued his legal studies, the mystery of the American wilderness pushed to the back of his mind, there to entice and taunt him in every spare moment.

Discouraged, he saw himself as a hopeless misfit, trying to master

a profession for which he cared nothing. He must obey his first and deepest urge. He must record the scenes of the West which even now were being enacted! He determined to leave Harvard and New England, and search for the still unknown story of the American Wilderness.

First, a period of bodily hardening was in order. He laid out a program of exercise, and hewed to it regardless of weather or mood. Rising early, he would run at first a half mile, then a mile, then more. A visit to the gymnasium would follow. Swimming and bar bell exercises were included. Then finally to bed, his arms limp strings of pain, every inch of his sensitive body protesting the ordeal. Exercise, he believed, would always harden and toughen the body, and improve the working of the vital organs. But, too late, he found he had overtaxed his heart. He suffered spells in which that organ would flutter rather than beat; at such times he gasped painfully for breath. His doctor insisted that he give up both studies and exercise, and journey to Europe for rest.

But in the libraries and museums of the Old World he found material on the North American story which flamed and fed the passion of his life. He procured documents, talked with historians, and amassed a wealth of information. He returned to America enriched by the notes which were to form the background for his life's work.

Back in Boston he devoted himself to arranging his material. But even as he worked, he realized that the drama of the American

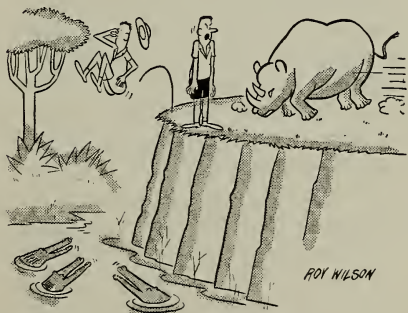
Indian was coming to a close. His losing battle with white civilization had not long to last. Soon he would disappear, and Parkman's chance to write from first-hand experience would be lost. It was now or never!

The year 1846 found Francis Parkman bound for the Oregon Trail. Somehow this puny white man managed to join a band of Ogillallah Indians. He rode and hunted with them, and fought by their side. The stern-faced, hard-muscled warriors of the plains must have sensed their white friend's heroic spirit, for they accepted him as one of their own.

But though his will was hard and equal to the life, his body gave him no peace. Nausea, headaches, and a host of minor ills plagued him. The glare of the sun's rays rendered him blind for hours at a time.

"You will destroy yourself, Francis," a friend wrote. "Give up this romantic dream and come home!"

After five months of such torture he did come home, a trembling, half-blind, physical wreck. Ruined in body, Francis Parkman was elated in mind; for now he



"I hate big decisions!"

possessed the vital, long-sought requisite for his work—first-hand experience. Now he knew his subject! His work could begin.

He was soon to learn that the job of arranging and writing from his notes would be as great a task as any he had encountered. When he attempted to write, the lines blurred before his eyes. Rarely could he snatch more than an hour of actual writing from the day. For days at a time he could not write a line. But gradually, bit by bit, the manuscript was completed.

The Oregon Trail, the adventures of a white youth among the Indians was published in 1849, and was immediately acclaimed by critics and the public. Parkman's friends, amazed and delighted by the achievement, urged him to quit while it was still possible for him to be nursed back to health. But the reception accorded his first book encouraged him, and he decided to write more. He married Catherine Bigelow, a childhood sweetheart, and after a honeymoon, turned back to his task. Once again he brought out his many notes. But this time his ruined eyes refused to decipher them. After a futile attempt to write from memory, he hired a secretary to read them to him. Writing was becoming ever more difficult for him. His trembling hand produced illegible, wavering lines. Often the pen would drop from the nerveless fingers. But write he must, for he found, like many another writer, that he was completely unable to dictate a story. Finally he constructed a metal frame with a series of guide wires. He slipped a sheet of paper

under the wire framework, then followed the wire to write his first straight line in months. His invention was successful! He could write legibly.

What little energy he had left now threatened to desert him completely. Five minutes a day of work was exhausting. Nevertheless three years later *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* was finished. It too was a success. Critics praised its accuracy, its wealth of fresh information, its beautiful flowing style. Overnight Francis Parkman became famous. But in the midst of triumph, new troubles came to this dauntless man. His wife Catherine died, and shortly after, his only son. An attack of water on the knee confined him to a wheelchair. But he considered his work unfinished. Back to the wire frame! In the face of repeated warnings from physicians that he had but a few months to live, he planned and carried out a writing program that was to take years.

"My maladies and I," he remarked, "are old friends. We have lived a long time together. Together we shall reach seventy." He was seventy, almost to the day, when he died in 1893. But he lived to complete what are recognized to be the finest writings of the history of the American West and Northwest. His account of the American Indian is exhaustive and authentic. *The Discovery of the Great West*, *The Pioneers of France in the New World*, *Frontenac*, *The Jesuits in North America*—all attest to Francis Parkman's superiority as a historian. His works, while scholarly and impressively documented, are never dull. He never forgot that he was

recording a tremendous story, and his cunning pen allowed none of its color, its excitement, and virility to go unrecorded.

In vain one searches the correspondence of this invincible invalid for a hint of self-pity or even anger at a cruel fate. The

bitterest letter he wrote was to a critic who had roused Parkman's indignation by publicly wondering how an invalid could have produced such masterful work!

"The proper end in life," he once wrote, "is not pleasure, but achievement."

The Power of the Cross

A LENTEN THOUGHT

There is a principle, an energy, a force, a love, which, crucified though it be, never gives up or breaks down, a love which undergoes all the appearance of being defeated, but, remaining love, wins its victory in what looks to the world like its defeat.

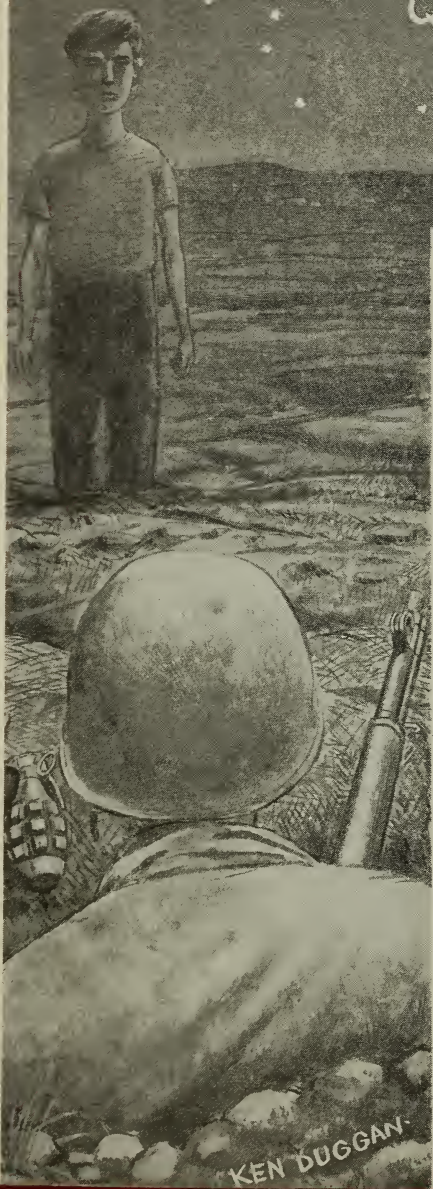
Take one instance at the other end of the scale, the example of Saint Telemachus. Imagine an Asiatic monk in his cell in quiet meditation. As he listens, it seems to him that God is guiding him to journey westward to Rome. When at last he reaches the Eternal City, Rome is full of excited people. A great victory over the Goths has just been won. Crowds jostle the monk in the streets. He overhears their excited tale of the program prepared for them in the Colosseum. Animals are to fight together. Men are to fight animals. Men are to fight men. Telemachus makes his way to the great amphitheater which seats eighty thousand people. He is on the lowest tier, nearest the sandy floor. A group of men march into the arena, and before they commence to fight one another, they halt before the royal box and cry out to Caesar, "We, who are about to die, salute thee." The soul of Telemachus is revolted, horrified, that in Rome, where the faith of Christ is spreading, this horrible slaughter should still continue. He sees in a flash why God wanted him to come to Rome. He rises, leaps on the low wall which alone separates him from the arena, and, in the silence which followed the greeting to Caesar, he shouts, "In the name of Christ, forbear!"

Laughter runs round the galleries. What can one man do to stop the amusement of eighty thousand, however revolting it be? But see, the saint has leaped down on the sand. As the gladiators clash with one another he rushes to the nearest group and thrusts himself between them. Indulgent they thrust him aside and continue to fight. The crowd roars with laughter. How ridiculous he looks! What a figure he is making! A gladiator strikes him with the flat of his sword. The saint stumbles, is up again, is between the combatants, is imploring them in the name of Christ to cease. The crowd thinks it funny no longer. "Run him through!" is the cry. There is the quick flash of a blade and Telemachus is lying in the sand. A man rises and leaves the Colosseum. Another follows. Another. The saint was a man of God. Christianity is respected by an increasing number. The year is about A.D. 400. The great amphitheater begins to empty. The mind of the multitude has changed. They cry for the games to cease. It was the last time in the Roman Colosseum that gladiatorial fights took place.

—JAMES CLAYPOOL, *Adapted from* LESLIE WEATHERHEAD

REPLACEMENT

Quentin R. Howard



My company was dug in above the town. It had suffered greatly. Replacements were trickling in from England. It was nine o'clock and a star-studded cold sky shimmered above like a giant scarf. There was not much light from the stars, and I was thankful. When nights were black I never paid attention to movements around me. I usually slept well on moonless nights, but tonight things were a bit different. The company had been warned that the enemy was just over the next hill. I looked down in the narrow valley and saw sprawled grotesque piles of rubble, mute evidence of grim fighting.

I had been too tired for much digging after twenty-four hours of relentless drives. I shivered in the cold, and the fine, yellow dirt ate into my skin. Some of the men stirred and talked in their sleep. Others conversed softly with one another. No doubt a few like myself just sat and gazed out over the dugouts into semi-darkness. I felt alone.

I stretched uncomfortably, turned to my side and tried to force sleep. Suddenly I felt some-

one was too near for comfort. One has such a feeling on a battlefield. I turned over onto my back quickly, shifted my elbows under me. Standing there, gazing at me, now outlined against the stars, was a boy. I rubbed my eyes, moved my legs, thinking I might be dreaming. Finally I sat up. The boy didn't move. Should I scold or ignore him? How had he gotten through the lines? Why had he stopped at this dugout when there were hundreds more?

"You . . . you might get killed out here," I said, half afraid, not of the boy, but of his presence in such a place. My voice sounded strange, and I licked dust-caked lips. The boy moved closer—so close that I could hear faint heartbeats.

"*Boche*," the boy said nervously. "*Boche no goot. Vous Boche.*"

He drew back to slap me. He was shaking like a leaf caught in the last autumn wind.

"*Boche no goot. Vous Boche, no goot*," the boy repeated. He took a step backward, saying over and over in a quiet breath, "*Boche . . . Boche.*"

"Shhh. *Je suis Americain*," I said loudly. I reached out and grabbed the boy roughly by the arm. "You over there, shut up," the sleepy voice of the sergeant yelled to the right of us. "You want Hitler's boy scouts to drop in on us?"

"Now, see what you've done. Keep quiet."

The boy tried to pull away, but I dragged him closer. With his free hand the boy reached down,

got a handful of dirt and sprinkled it in my hair and face. I tried to shake it off, but felt it fall silently into my hair and down my open shirt collar.

I shook the boy hard and reached for my flashlight. I turned the beam in his face. The face looked pale and thin under the film of dirt. I almost laughed at the freckled nose, thinking that several years ago mine was the same. My hand dropped limply from the small but hard-muscled arm. A shell exploded at the foot of the hill. I flicked off the light as the sergeant mumbled sleepily. I pulled the boy down beside me. I wondered why the kid hadn't gone with the inhabitants when orders had been given to evacuate the city. Surely he wouldn't want to stay with me. Any minute the fight might start again. There were thousands like him and by morning he would be gone, I thought.

Suddenly the boy looked up into my face.

"*Americains goot*," he said simply.

"*Oui, Francaise good, too*," I said. I looked hard at the boy, and laughed thinly as his blond head nodded sleepily.

"You're a good boy," I said. "You can take my place. Let's say you're my replacement."

"Oh, *oui*," the boy said. "I like big fight. I went to school some. Learned to speak some of your talk. *Boche* destroy my school. I glad be replaceman."

"You've got to have a name.

What's your name?" I asked. The boy shook his head. "It's all right. I guess men like me and you don't need a name."

I fed the boy and watched as he ate hungrily, never once looking up from the can of rations. By having someone close I felt more secure. The boy's body felt warm on mine. Soon a quietness came over the dugouts. I heard movements over on the enemy side but was too tired to think much about them. I slept a tired, deep sleep that I hadn't enjoyed in many hours. When I awoke it was still dark, but over in the east, through battle-scarred trees, sharp tiny streaks of dawn began to show.

Such a short sleep, I thought. I pulled my handkerchief from my pocket and dabbed tired eyes. I shifted and ran my hand along the dugout. The boy was gone. "I hope he got safe to where he was going," I mumbled to myself.

It was early, but I was hungry.

I pulled my haversack to me. The strap was unlatched and the sack was empty. I had filled it yesterday, I was sure, with enough provisions to last three days. I slapped my sides and missed the feel of the cold, steel bowie knife. My gun and bayonet were also missing. But it was still too dark to see clearly. I waited a few minutes and searched desperately in and around the dugout.

That boy, I thought, a scavenger of the battlefield. My mouth was dry, and I clutched my canteen and pulled it to me. A piece of paper was hanging to one of the buckles of the cloth covering. I jerked it off and held it in front of me so that there would be enough light from the east to read it.

"*Monsieur*," I read the childish scrawl, "if me a replaceman me need somethin to do with. Pardon. Don't fel bad with me. *Au Revoir*."

Matter of Fact

Human tears may be diluted as much as 6000 times and they will still kill a hundred different kinds of microbes.

During the Civil War, conscientious objectors could buy their way out of the Union Army for \$300.

The President of the United States must sign his name about 600 times a day.

Contrary to the time-honored conception of artists, lightning does not travel in a zigzag path of right angles, but curves and twists without making any sharp turns.

In the early Middle Ages, Christian countries reckoned March 25 as the first day of the year.

It is estimated that within the past 2000 years, some 800 cities have been destroyed by earthquakes with a loss of perhaps one million lives.

—Harold Helfer

"It's All English to Me"

Luke Neely

**A pair of bright eyes and smiling lips
explained everything in two quiet words**

The international composition of the Eighth Army in Korea led to some amusing incidents while the shooting was going on. An American lieutenant I know is still talking about this one.

He was in charge of a convoy of trucks dispatched forward in order to pick up a battalion of the First Cavalry Division, which was coming off the line, and transport them to a reserve area. As they entered the blackout zone, he had all drivers switch to their tiny, hooded blackout lights and slow the speed of the convoy. They finally came to the rendezvous point, and he directed all his trucks into a cleared field. When all the engines were silenced, the drivers could hear small-arms fire at fairly close range, and occasionally something heavier hurtled overhead.

The lieutenant sat in his jeep at the edge of the road waiting for the infantry to appear. Suddenly he stiffened. Down the road they had just traveled came another vehicle with headlights ablaze, bathing all Korea in bright, perilous light. The lieutenant's first, miserable, self-interested

thought was that here came one of his own vehicles which had fallen behind and was now trying to catch up.

He jumped from his jeep and ran to the road, where he stood waving and blinking his flashlight at the approaching headlights. Just as he was about to leap out of the way of the oncoming vehicle, it slowed and came to halt a few yards from him, with a squealing of unmaintained brakes. The full headlights burned on. The lieutenant rushed out of their glare to the cab of the truck, roaring in a way the leadership tracts deplore at the figure dimly perceived behind the wheel. He finished his tirade. Still the lights profaned the night.

"Turn—out—those—LIGHTS!" bellowed the lieutenant, bringing his flashlight to bear on the offender.

Into its beam there floated a dusty, mustached face with amiable bright eyes which squinted in the raw light, and smiling lips which moved and explained everything in two quiet, unanswerable words:

"Me Greek."

the **Building Fund**

RUTH PARVIN



Reverend William Comstock straightened up from where he had pushed the leaf mould tight around the base of a gardenia plant. He rubbed the palm of his hand against the small of his back and stretched. It was early spring but already weeds had started their relentless march on his tiny garden. He crouched again and pulled violently at a big weed as if it were the Prince of Darkness himself. A voice with just a bit of brogue boomed out from the sidewalk behind him, "A fine day it is for such as this and a finer day it would be for tearing down this old church of yours and moving into the new one."

The little minister straightened up again and measured the big priest with his eyes. The priest returned the candid gaze just as he had returned it fourteen years before when they had first measured each other in the same manner. Both men nodded unconsciously, just as they had at their first meeting. The results of the measuring were satisfactory, for each found what he sought in the other. Each saw a reflection of his own sincerity and of his own singleness of purpose that reinforced his own understanding. Serving mankind was the destiny of each, and so their frequent, brief encounters eased the loneliness of spirit which inevitably stalks such a destiny. These things and proximity of their churches had fostered their friendship.

"These gardenias don't need me; they're better left alone, but

this building program keeps me so stirred up that I have to poke at them now and then even if it kills them," he smiled dryly.

"Yes, I know; and it's safer with gardenias than it is with people; though sometimes it might be more satisfying . . ." his voice trailed off into a chuckle.

Both men knew the value of the laughs they shared. Being two men of excellent taste, they had always carefully avoided the discussion of any topics concerning their profession except in the most superficial manner, lest the very things which bound them together might thrust them apart. Each possessing also a fine sense of humor, their jokes often probed deeply into the things which they did not discuss and revealed their deep understandings of human nature. The sharing of these jokes had come to be for each of them the final step in the distillation of hard-earned drops of human knowledge.

The Reverend Mr. Comstock kicked at a clod of dirt and remarked, "This Baptist soil seems to encourage weeds."

"Perhaps," agreed the priest, "but it also nourishes some beautiful flowers. I hope the soil over on 16th Avenue will be as good."

Comstock sighed, "I wonder sometimes if we will ever get over there. I can't see my way clear to start tearing this down until more funds come in. It's almost as expensive demolishing these days as building. Once we get a good start, the new building has to be

Ruth Parvin is the daughter of a Protestant minister. She is a Roman Catholic by conversion. This story of a Baptist pastor and a Roman Catholic priest is her first published fiction piece.

ready for the installation of the things we need from here. That means a quick switch on some articles between Sundays. Sometimes I wish we'd never started building. But this church has grown too small, and the pledges *were* made. The people seemed ready to build. It's just that the money is coming in more slowly than I'd hoped it would."

There was compassion in the priest's voice as he said, "It's always slow, Comstock. Remember that committee we were on for building the area Boy Scout house? We thought we'd never get the funds collected for that, and it was a small thing as compared with the task you are doing."

As the priest went on down the street, the pastor looked after him and recalled the days they had worked together on the Boy Scout committee. One time the priest had confided in him that he had a tidy bit of money from an aunt that enabled him to make generous contributions to ventures that interested him. He remembered a pale blue check Father Ryan had put into the fund one day. Following the word For—in the lower left hand corner, he had simply written "Boys." It would be nice, Bill Comstock thought, to be able to do things like that.

Mrs. Comstock did not share her husband's enthusiasm for the Padre. At the dinner table that evening she remarked, "Your big Irish friend got the new people in the 1600 Greenwood Place house."

Her husband looked troubled, but he said only, "I don't know why I expected them to be Bap-

tists. Just because the Cubberlys were, I suppose. Well, we'll miss the Cubberlys." Indeed they would miss the Cubberlys, who had recently sold the big white house and moved east. It was one of the most pretentious houses in the parish, and the contributions that had issued from it for the Baptist church had been generous.

Because the new owners of 1600 Greenwood Place had become members of Father Ryan's flock, William Comstock would owe the priest a little treat. He blushed guiltily at the thought of this under the scrutiny of Mrs. Comstock. He knew she would look with disapproval upon the cokes and milk shakes which he and the priest bought each other to even such scores. He had never felt that it would be wise to mention it to her.

The treating had started during his first year at this church. A Roman Catholic family had moved out of a house on the other side of the block and the place had immediately been occupied by a Baptist family. This had been one of their first jokes to share. He had mentioned the change to Father Ryan, and the priest had promptly insisted that since he had "lost" he had the privilege of buying a treat. From that time on, whenever the house or apartment tenanted by a parishioner of either was vacated, they watched eagerly for the newcomers to profess their faith. The treats were always on the loser. Of course, there were times when the newcomers were Episcopalians or Methodists or members of some other sect. These they looked upon as interlopers.



It might have taken a bit of contriving on the part of the minister to bring about a meeting with his friend Father Ryan, but it didn't. He was on his way to the new church to do some measuring when the priest overtook him and demanded payment.

Over their malted milks in a drug store on 16th Avenue, they fell again to discussing building funds and the reluctance of some people to pay their pledges. It was the same, they observed, in every faith. Pledges made in a burst of piety had to be paid in the cold light of other desires. The priest poked at the foam in the bottom of his glass. "In some homes where I visit they throw a scarf or doily over the new television set if they are behind on their pledges to the church. Sometimes I admire the scarf first to see what they'll say."

Bill Comstock gave a short laugh, "I'll bet you get some funny reactions to that!"

Father Ryan pulled a long face. "If the woman of the house is doing the talking, she usually accepts the compliment on her lovely scarf, and I can see she thinks the old priest doesn't see so good, maybe."

"But the men—?"

"Now the men tend to be more inventive. They know I can see as well as they can or better; so they make up excuses like an old aunt sent them the set for their children."

"I haven't heard that one yet this week," the minister remarked drily. "The dear old aunty who just happened to have a spare one around!"

While they waited for change, the priest said haltingly, "I wish I could make a donation to your fund, but I guess I couldn't expect my bishop to understand my wanting to help build a Baptist church." The corners of his eyes crinkled and the two men shared their best laugh ever. Then they went their separate ways.

The next morning in his mail, the Reverend William Comstock found a letter with "St. Mary's Church" for the return address. He suspected a joke and opened it surreptitiously. There lay a note: "I've thought of a contribution my bishop can't help approving. Father Ryan." Then there was a check, a pale blue one, also signed by Father Ryan. In the lower left hand corner it said. "For: Demolition of the Baptist Church!"

The Last Cow Country

George S. Wells

It could happen only in Texas. For only the Lone Star State is big enough to lose a chunk of land the size of Maine, and never miss it!

That is exactly what happened, in a figurative sense, to the Big Bend country. Tucked away in a V-shaped corner formed by the southward bend of the Rio Grande River, this vast sweep of grassy valleys and high mountain ranges was so effectively isolated by its position that time came to a stand-

still. Today, it is a living fragment of the Old West.

This is the West immortalized in fiction. It is high desert country, thrust nearly a mile into the sky and carpeted with green when the sparse summer rains dampen the soil. Not enough rain for crop growing, but plenty for fattening fine cattle herds. Hence, the Bend is dedicated exclusively to the cow.

But the people are the true interest here. They still live the



traditional ranch life, each family miles away from the nearest neighbor and even more miles from the nearest trading point. The chuck wagon still trails the round-up crews, and the man or woman who cannot ride a horse has no social standing. The cowboy alternates between his horse and a jeep, both of which are inclined to bow his legs, and the ranch wife drives her pickup truck with a saddle hanging over the tailgate.

Dude ranches are as unknown as barns in this country. Even Big Bend National Park, newest of the nation's playgrounds, is looked upon as a Texas park. People from Alpine and Marfa drive down to spend restful weekends in its high mountain basin, and East Texans drive as far as eight hundred miles to gaze upon the strange sight of mountains in a state they always thought was flat from end to end.

The towns in Big Bend are small and usually clustered in a valley. The stranger is inclined to raise his eyebrows in surprise at the number of churches, forgetting that their congregations may be drawn from a radius of fifty miles.

These churches, surprisingly, go on holiday once a year. It is the occasion of the annual Cowboy Camp Meeting, a community religious and social gathering which has no counterpart elsewhere in the nation. Denominational lines are discarded in favor of a common faith in God and man. Sermons and Bible classes are held daily for a week, but quite as important is the fellowship of the cowboys, ranchers, and townspeople seeing each other once again after a year's interval.



Santa Elena Canyon in Big Bend Park cuts a 2,000-foot gash in the mountains.

This camp meeting, founded by the late Rev. William B. Bloys back in 1890, is held in beautiful Skillman's Grove, high in the pine-clad Davis Mountains. People come from hundreds of miles around to stay in tents or group cabins, to eat succulent beef provided free by the larger ranches, and to sing or to applaud amateur instrumentalists under the summer stars.

The Cowboy Camp Meeting, more than anything else, typifies the people of the Big Bend. It is the leveler of both spiritual and physical barriers, welding a tight-

knit community in a land of lonesome distances.

Peace is more than a word in the cow country. It is a long-coveted and hard-won way of living, in which the stranger is a brother until he proves himself otherwise. First, the Indians had to be fought, then the armies and the bandit gangs from south of the border, and, finally, the swaggering badmen who bullied their way. The last border raid occurred at Glenn Springs only 35 years ago.

In the early days there were no ranchers; for cattle were worthless so far from a market, and buffalo still roamed the nearby Texas plains. There were only trade routes, narrow ribbons of travel, to be guarded through a country both rugged and dangerous.

Then came the Civil War and an incredible event. The Big Bend country literally was given back to the Indians! Troops pulled out, the freight routes were abandoned, the mail riders left, and the Indians once more could hunt and range unmolested along the Rio Grande.



The inevitable soon followed. As the war ended, there was a new rush to the West. Stray cattle, abandoned with the coming hostilities, had grown into herds that rivaled the disappearing buffalo. Some men began to round them up, slap brands on them to signify ownership, and look for possible markets for them. Back came the troops, and with them came the railroads to spell the final defeat of the red men and to bring the first fences to tame the Big Bend.

Since then, there has been little change except for occasional flurries. Like the discovery of the world's richest quicksilver lode, the establishment of the nation's first rubber factory in Marathon, and the Progress City land boom in which a promoter sold perpendicular lots on top of Santiago Peak. The latter still brings an occasional visitor, deed in hand, looking for a non-existent lot.

But all these things proved temporal, and it remained for the U.S. Army Air Force in World War II to enter the wedge of permanent change into the Big Bend. The airfield engineers, searching the West for good locations, had unearthed a startling fact. Nowhere else in the United States was the weather so lenient that planes could fly every day of the year. And, incidental to this discovery, they found a high, dry climate that was good for the healthy and curative for the ill. There was enough rain to keep the desert green, but not enough to prevent the sun shining every day of the year. As an extra bonus, there were no mosquitoes.

So impressed were service men and women by the climate and the

alpine beauty of the Big Bend that war's end came tinged with regret, and they looked sadly over their shoulders at the empty hangars left to clutter the wide valley floors.

Today, to the astonishment and delight of West Texans, the service man is back. The boom the war brought to the towns of the Big Bend is returning in more substantial form, as the veterans move in with their families to settle America's "last frontier."

Equally important, the Bend is beginning to share its devotion to the cow with a new idol called "the tourist." Vacationers who once thought of West Texas as a suburb of the Moon are beginning to realize that it is really in mid-continent, reasonably accessible from either coast.

Towns like Marfa, Sanderson, and Alpine have discovered themselves and are advertising in that

quiet way that is so typical of the region. An association has been formed to entice travelers to use U.S. 90, the scenic route through Big Bend. Signs along much-traveled U.S. 80, farther to the north, give hurrying coast-to-coast commuters pause, reminding them of the charm of less hurried paths among the Davis mountains.

The combination of new blood brought by the veterans, new money brought in by the tourists, and stability brought by health seekers and retired couples eventually will remove the people from their former dependence upon the land. But that time is not yet. Hardly a billboard mars the beauty of the desert as you drive past clumps of crimson-tipped ocotillo plants and the spade-shaped blossoms of the Spanish bayonet. And in a town like Alpine, you can still rent a house for as little as \$25 a month and spend the winter in

The ghost mining town of Terlingua.



freedom from fuel bills and snowstorms.

You would need a winter to do justice to this land. For it is 99.9% pure vacation paradise. Dry as it is, there is good bass fishing at Balmorhea reservoir and fabulous catfish up to sixty pounds lurking in the pools of the Rio Grande. In season, there is hunting for deer and antelope, and bighorn sheep are being re-introduced this year. Alpine boasts a golf course with oiled sand greens and fairways carved from rock. This is the only golf course in the world where you can actually score minus yardage on a drive.

There are amateur rodeos to attend, frontier celebrations and baseball games. Alpine has a stadium which is said to be equipped better than any of the major league parks, and when major league clubs play exhibition games here each year the attendance exceeds the population of the town.

A magnet which draws Texan and tourist alike is Big Bend National Park, a playground the size of Rhode Island, in a county the size of Connecticut. Some idea of its size comes to you when you turn off the main highway at Marathon into the park road and read this sign: WARNING—NEXT GAS STATION 79 MILES.

You drive through a winter-browned desert, hemmed in by chocolate mountains. Here, you may look in vain for a tree, for the Dead Horse range on your left and the Del Norte peaks on your right are carved from solid rock, and the best they will support are scattered clumps of greasewood and squat yucca stems. The

mountains fade behind you as you ride out into Tornillo Flat and dip through the countless draws where in summer lurks the danger of flash floods.

Then you catch your breath at one of the most beautiful sights you have ever seen. It is the blue-shadowed mightiness of the Chisos mountains, thrusting suddenly from the desert floor, rising straight up into the sky and scraping the clouds with its jagged peaks.

The Chisos range seems to float alone in a sea of desert, so isolated from any other mountains that its wildlife migrates within its boundaries as the seasons change. Its plant life is unique, marooned in the Chisos like the smaller forms of wildlife. The lower slopes are barren desert which supports no higher vegetation than the lowly prickly pear cactus. This gives way to lush grasslands, surrounded by mesquite and piñon pine forests in a great depression called "The Basin." On top, folded out of sight among the highest peaks, is a renegade forest of Douglas Fir, trapped here in the distant past when the world was changing shape.

Horseback trips are almost essential in the park, for most of the trails are so designed that they are too long for walking. But there are interesting motor trips, as well, including one which completely encircles the Chisos range and skirts the Rio Grande for fifty miles.

A startling sight is Santa Canyon, a two-thousand-foot cleft in the Del Carmen mountains where the river enters the area of the park. It makes a green swath

across the desert, cuts more giant gorges, and exits again through the Dead Horse range on its final dropaway toward the Gulf of Mexico.

The park is new and not fully developed, but a concession has been established in the Basin which provides overnight cabins, a postoffice, a restaurant, and a store for campers.

Outside the park boundaries, on the west there is an interesting ghost town to visit. It is called Terlingua, and most of its carelessly scattered houses are made of stone. The roofs have fallen in, but the walls remain intact, requiring only new roofing each time there is new demand for the quicksilver ore which brought the town into being.

Strongly competing with the park for tourist interest is the Davis mountain area in the northern reaches of the Big Bend. The state has built a winding, scenic parkway through seventy-four miles of rolling mountain terrain. It is lined with picnic *remadas* and such historic scenes as the rock on which Kit Carson once carved his name.

Down in the town of Fort Davis are the crumbling ruins of a fort, once the guardian of the whole Big Bend country. Though it is privately owned, it is accessible without charge to passersby, and part of its famed Officer's Row has been restored and made into overnight quarters for travelers—surely one of the strangest motels

to be found in this country.

Other sights for the stranger are the Jersey Lily saloon in which Judge Roy Bean dispensed the only law west of the Pecos and sometimes used the famed "hanging tree" a few yards from his cracker barrel court; the interesting Mexican towns of Boquillas and Lajitas down in the apex of the river's bend, and Old Fortin, the fortress which once guarded the freighters' trail into Chihuahua and on to distant Mexico City.

Don't look for signs directing you to such places, for they are few in number. No sign will tell you, for instance, about the strange flash flood which swept through the adobe village of Utopia and dissolved it, leaving neat rows of rooftops sitting on the ground. No marker points out the rounded cone of Guadalupe Peak, 8,700 feet, and highest point in all Texas.

The absence of sign boards and hucksters is part of the charm of the Big Bend. Your eye roams uninstructed across the inviting distances, and only when it lights upon something that stirs your heart need you pause to ask what it is and how to get there.

The greatest attraction of all, perhaps, is the chance to mingle with a people still barely touched by the leveling brush of progress. This is cow country, where every man stands straight and strong, and where the echoes of violence still remind him of the sweetness inherent in peace.

Don't follow any advice, no matter how good, until you feel as deeply in your spirit as you think in your mind that the counsel is wise.

—DAVID SEABURY, *Forbes*

Some things you may
not know about

"Porky"



Harold Helfer

One of the big standing arguments pertaining to the animal kingdom is whether porcupines can send their quills sailing through the air at their enemies.

The answer is yes—and no.

It's really mostly no. That is to say, it is doubtful whether the quills actually fly any noticeable distance between the moment they leave Mr. or Mrs. Porcupine until the moment they hook up into someone else. But the quills of the porcupine are so loose, and so already-packed-up to travel, that it is doubtful whether it makes much difference to the sadder-but-wiser attacker of the porcupine if the sharp darts now lodging painfully in him actually did any air-traveling for a split second or are the result of actual bodily contact.

It only takes a few of these quills to send even the bravest and hardiest individual on his way. "Porky" is not only a very accurate dart-tosser, but he lets them go with a fierce abandon. They not only puncture a skin

area; they keep traveling. A dog or a cat who gets some of these in him could never remove these barbs himself. It would take a veterinarian with pliers to complete the painful process. If left alone, these prickles have a tendency to work their way into the blood stream and may eventually cause death.

Everyone is so fascinated by a porcupine's quills that hardly anyone ever takes a look at his face. Which is perhaps just as well. He is not very pretty. In fact, he looks sort of like a pig.

That's what, actually, he is called; literally, in French, "porcupine" means a "a pig with spines."

Biologists are inclined to consider the porcupine as a "slow-moving stupid animal." For all matters and purposes, though, the porcupine is pretty smart. Why should he be in a hurry anyway? What's the rush? Any old tree bark will do him as a meal. For dessert, twigs, leaves, and buds are just fine as far as he is con-

cerned. And if some folks want to take after him let them—at their own risk. He's got plenty of quills to spare.

The porcupine disdains to look any accoster in the eye. In fact, the bristly fellow makes a fine art of disdain by always showing his attacker his tail. This not only is pretty humiliating, but the swish of Porky's tail is an excellent way for him to dislodge a few barbs into whoever's trying to take liberties with him.

The porcupine is covered with these quills almost from stem to

cate the "spiny little pig" have never been very successful. One reason seems to be that it is naturally hard to work up a great deal of affection for somebody who bristles so. And, on the other hand, porcupines never have seemed to be able to work up a great deal of enthusiasm for the human race either. They adopt an aloof, condescending attitude toward man, as if to say, "The best you can do is to get up some plain, measly, hardly-worth-talking-about goosepimples, but look at the way we bristle!"

Porcupines are unsociable little pigs who bristle at man's 'how-de-do'

stern, the exception being the features of his face and his belly. The only way a porcupine can be successfully attacked is to flop him on his back. In other words, one has to flop him quicker than he can flip those darts of his.

Incidentally, porcupine meat is considered very tasty and nourishing and is highly recommended to anybody lost in the woods.

Porcupines, for all their built-in missiles, are really quite peaceable and would never think of bothering anybody who didn't bother them first. Even their quills usually behave just like so much matted hair. It's only when the animals are in danger or excited that the bristling takes place. And what bristles they can be! Some are a foot long, which is about half the size of the porcupine himself.

Attempts by man to domesti-

The truth of the matter is that there is something about all those quills that keeps even porcupines from becoming over-social with one another. In fact, except for certain periods when they get into a rather romantic mood, they are apt to live alone and appear to like it.

There is one talent that a porcupine has that isn't generally realized. He can produce a rattle-like sound with his quilly tail. True, these rattles may not have so much range and decibels of power as a rattlesnake, but the porcupine is apt to work up quite a nice rattle anyway.

The scientific name for the porcupine is *erethizontidae*, which sounds quite imposing; and grudgingly or otherwise, it is hard not to admit that the porcupine is quite a fellow.

ST. JOHN OF GOD

Glenn Everett

Portugal has issued a set of six stamps to honor one of the most extraordinary religious figures of the Middle Ages, St. John of God, founder of Christian hospitals.

Today, when there are hospitals in virtually every city to which sick and injured may be taken, it is hard to comprehend the brutality and inhumanity of the days when the sick were left untended to live or die according to their own resources. Yet the fact that we do live in a society that gives immediate care to the victim of any accident or illness, even if he is a penniless stranger, is due in large part to the fact that we have come to believe in the practical application of Christian brotherhood.

St. John of God pioneered in teaching the responsibility Christians have to care for the sick.

He was born in the village of Montemor, Portugal, in 1495. At the age of eight he ran away from home and tried to make his way to the famous city of Madrid. He

underestimated the distance and fell faint on the road from hunger. He might have died had he not been rescued and cared for by a friendly farmer who gave him employment as a shepherd.

The wanderlust seized him again when he was fourteen, and he ran away to join the army. He had a varied career as a soldier, fighting the Moors in Africa, the Turks in Hungary, and in various other European wars of the period. Military life corrupted him, and in 1536 at the age of forty-one he was sentenced to be hanged for a serious offense against the law. On the eve of his execution his sentence was commuted to dishonorable discharge from the army.

St. John learned to pray during this period when he faced an ignominious death, and after he was released, a great conversion occurred in his life. He became an itinerant peddler of religious books in the vicinity of Gibraltar. One day while on the road to

Granada, Spain, he saw a vision of God that was so real to him that he dedicated his life to works of faith.

St. John's claim of the vision won for him only ridicule and an official declaration by the municipal authorities of Granada that he was a madman. He was cast into a dungeon with the insane. The neglect and mistreatment of these wretched creatures outraged him. When he was released he also found victims of other illnesses suffering and dying in the very streets while the callous passers-by ignored them.

St. John rented a house and

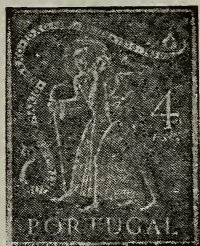
order of the Brothers Hospitalers were two men who had tried to kill each other in a fight and whom he had reconciled. Soon there were others, and a regular hospital was established.

His sponsors got so tired of buying him new cloaks because he was always giving his own away that they finally designed a special one for him that is still worn by the order he founded. In Italy today they are called "Fate ben Fratelli," ("Do-good Brothers").

St. John died in 1550 as a result of overexertion in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue a man from drowning.

**Even as sloth is the way that leads to hell, so
is holy diligence the way that leads to heaven.**

—Francis of Assisi



went out into the streets in search of the sick. Those who could not walk he carried on his back to his makeshift quarters. For a time he supported his charges by selling faggots of dry sticks from door to door. With the few pesos thus earned, he would buy food. He nursed his patients until he fell asleep at night from sheer exhaustion.

Soon thereafter his eloquent appeals began to touch the hearts of the people of Granada. Wealthy sponsors appeared who gave him generous donations. He also found assistance in caring for his patients. The first two recruits for what was to grow into the

No sooner had he died than the grateful Granadans hailed him as a saint. He was given the appellation "St. John of God" because of his vision of God, and to differentiate him from other saints of the same name, including the Apostle.

The work he started lived on after him. It was the teaching and example of men like St. John of God that brought to the Christian church a realization of its responsibility for healing.

Today there are 575 Protestant hospitals in the United States with a bed capacity to care for 86,250 patients, and 789 Roman Catholic hospitals with a bed capacity of 119,027.

Sixty-two years ago, on a bright summer's day, a party of teachers began a climb by horse and wagon to the summit of Pike's Peak in Colorado. As the great eye-filling panorama spread out before

The author gave Americans some lines of which they can always be proud. This song sounded a new note. The spirit of braggadocio is entirely lacking, and gone too is the mood of earlier song

"America the Beautiful"

Francis Howard

them, one of the group was swept by sudden inspiration.

Katharine Lee Bates, professor of English at Wellesley College, found words arranging themselves into the opening lines of "America the Beautiful." The far expanse left her too moved to say much to her companions, but her poetic gift did not fail her.

Newly come from the "White City" of the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, and still remembering the "amber waves of grain" on the long train ride across the prairie, she put all these things in her hymn of praise. The lines were written out that night on her return to the hotel in Colorado Springs.

Probably none of her associates dreamed that another memorable contribution had been made to the nation's library of noble patriotic songs. They were quite unaware that their quiet-spoken companion had written something that would rank beside "America" and "The Star-spangled Banner." Yet that is the way great songs and poems are produced.

writers who boasted of their country "right or wrong." Katharine Bates aspired to a higher type of patriotism.

Speaking of "America the Beautiful," Gamaliel Bradford, the biographer and an old neighbor of the author, declared: "It expressed the highest and deepest emotions of patriotism, not in any spirit of militant aggression and world-conquering imperialism, but with a profound gratitude and affection for the country, the government, and the traditions that have made us what we are."

In these inspired stanzas the nation's valiant pioneers are impressively memorialized. So, too, are the heroes "who more than sell their country loved" and the patriots who dreamed of cities "undimmed by human tears." But the hymn's climax comes in the nobler mission the author invoked for her country. "God shed His grace on thee, and crown thy good with brotherhood," we pray when we sing it. For this spiritual emphasis, all good and true Americans will long treasure "America, the Beautiful."

O beautiful for spacious skies,
 For amber waves of grain,
 For purple mountain majesties
 Above the fruited plain!
 America! America!
 God shed His grace on thee,
 And crown thy good with brother-
 hood
 From sea to shining sea.



O beautiful for pilgrim feet
 Whose stern, impassioned stress
 A thoroughfare for freedom beat
 Across the wilderness!
 America! America!
 God mend thine every flaw,
 Confirm thy soul in self-control,
 Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes proved
 In liberating strife,
 Who more than self their country
 loved,
 And mercy more than life!
 America! America!
 May God thy gold refine,
 Till all success be nobleness,
 And every gain divine.



O beautiful for patriot dream
 That sees, beyond the years,
 Thine alabaster cities gleam,
 Undimmed by human tears!
 America! America!
 God shed His grace on thee,
 And crown thy good with brother-
 hood
 From sea to shining sea.

Geographical Locations

Joseph C. Stacey

Listed below, in jumbled fashion, are 15 noted "geographical locations" (i.e., districts, hills, capes, mountains, etc.), together with the cities, states, countries and continents in, or on, which they may be found. Can you match up at least 10 correctly for a passing score? 11-to-13 is good; 14-15 excellent.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Harlem | (a) JAPAN |
| 2. Back Bay | (b) NEPAL and TIBET |
| 3. The Loop | (c) SOUTH AMERICA |
| 4. Nob Hill | (d) VIRGINIA |
| 5. Zion (Hill) | (e) NEW YORK CITY |
| 6. Hampton Roads | (f) PENNSYLVANIA |
| 7. Cape Hatteras | (g) CHARLESTOWN, MASS. |
| 8. Cape of Good Hope | (h) SAN FRANCISCO |
| 9. Cape Horn | (i) BOSTON, MASS. |
| 10. Gobi Desert | (j) NORTH CAROLINA |
| 11. Mount Everest | (k) ITALY |
| 12. Bunker Hill | (l) AFRICA |
| 13. Vesuvius | (m) CHICAGO |
| 14. Valley Forge | (n) JERUSALEM |
| 15. Fujiyama | (o) MONGOLIA and
TURKESTAN |

15-a. 1-e, 2-f, 3-m, 4-h, 5-n, 6-d, 7-j, 8-l, 9-c, 10-o, 11-b, 12-g, 13-k, 14-f,

ANSWERS

Some people call it

"God's Room"

New York City with its gaiety and rush of everyday living, somehow manages to offer peace and relaxation.

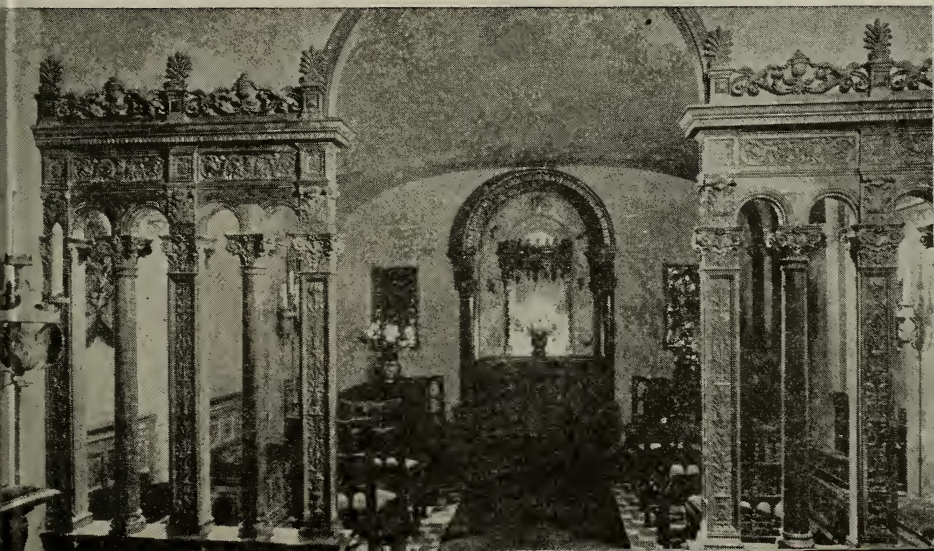
New York can be as lonely as can any spot away from home. When the lure of the theatre, the movie house, or the gay restaurant isn't enough, then there is a hushed room—just a stone's throw from New York's bustling Grand Central Terminal—welcoming visitors whose need for prayer and meditation over-rides the Big Town's distracting lighter side. The "Meditation Chapel" in well-known Hotel Biltmore, has been referred to by many as "God's Room." For over a quarter of a

century its doors have remained open.

The chapel, as far as the Biltmore management has been able to learn, is the only one now existing in any hotel. It is non-sectarian. It has brought solace over the years to the out-of-town visitor; to the harried New Yorker; to the church man and the man without a church alike.

The chapel was suggested by a Philadelphia lawyer, Joseph R. Wilson, in 1923, and from his inspiration Biltmore Room 300 became The Meditation Chapel in 1928.

As you step from the carpeted hotel corridor into the hallowed atmosphere of "God's Room," you are welcomed by the scent of fresh flowers, the reflection of the soft light from the stained glass windows on the polished oak paneling, and the inscription above the altar: "Come Unto Me All Ye That Labor And Are Heavy Laden And I Will Give You Rest."



The General Commission on Chaplains
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1. Advent Christian Church
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7. Christian Reformed Church
8. Church of Christ, Scientist
9. Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)
10. Church of Nazarene
11. Churches of God in North America
12. Colored Methodist Episcopal Church
13. Cumberland Presbyterian Church
14. Evangelical Congregational Church
15. Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America
16. Evangelical and Reformed Church
17. The Evangelical United Brethren Church
18. Free Methodist Church of North America
19. The General Council of Congregational Christian Churches
20. International Convention of Disciples of Christ
21. The Methodist Church
22. The Moravian Church
23. National Baptist Convention of America
24. National Baptist Convention, U. S. A., Inc.
25. North American Baptist General Conference
26. Presbyterian Church in the United States
27. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
28. Primitive Methodist Church, U. S. A.
29. The Protestant Episcopal Church
30. The Reformed Church in America
31. Salvation Army
32. Seventh-Day Adventists
33. Seventh-Day Baptist General Conference
34. Unitarian Churches
35. The United American Free Will Baptist Church
36. United Brethren in Christ (Old Constitution)
37. United Presbyterian Church of North America
38. Wesleyan Methodist Church of America

United Fellowship

Stubborn Christians

Sometimes you just have to be plain stubborn if you want to be Christlike. You see, Christ was sometimes pretty stubborn. His folks, thinking him both wrong and daft, came to take him home, but he stubbornly kept on with his ministry. When he finally set his face to go to Jerusalem for the fatal feast, many friends tried to talk or scare him out of it, but he just kept on walking. When he knew that the temple clique was out to get him, he went right back every day to teach in the temple. When he was tempted to choose the easy wrong instead of the hard right, he was a very stubborn man.



Real Christians have always been stubborn in meeting tests. After the people of Iconium stoned Paul and left him outside the city to die, he came to and stubbornly walked right back into the city. When early Christians in Rome were asked only to put a pinch of incense on the fire in worship of the emperor, they set their jaws and turned to walk into the arena where the lions waited. Martyrs by the hundreds have turned out to be very stubborn in their faith. The true Christian faith lived because of their stubborn persistence.

It takes courage to be stubbornly Christian. Only the coward knuckles under when the gang yells, "Ah, come on; be a good sport," and he knows the thing they are asking is wrong. It's sad to see a young Christian sell out his true standards just because some cheap pagan says, "Please." Isn't it strange that we give medals of honor to men who stubbornly stand their ground against enemy fire; but we laugh so hard at the fellow who stands fast against attacks on his Christian faith and standards? Perhaps we need a new idea of courage and heroism.

Stubborn Christians sometimes make people awfully angry—they must make God mighty happy.

—Joe Dana

I Am The Way, The Truth, and The Life

THE OPENING THOUGHT:

Gracious Spirit, dwell with me
I myself would gracious be;
And, with words that help and heal,
Would Thy life in mine reveal;
And, with actions bold and meek,
Would for Christ, my Saviour, speak.

—Thomas T. Lynch

THE OPENING HYMN: O Worship the King

THE SCRIPTURE: John 14:1-16

THE POEM:

Jesus said, "I am the Way
That leads men home to God."
The way of faith, the way of love;
This is the path He trod.

Jesus said, "I am the Truth
Revealing God to men."
Believe in Him with all your heart
And know God's truth again!

Jesus said, "I am the Life
Which brings men strength and power."
Oh, seek Him now, and learn His way
That you may face this hour!

—Hoover Rupert
Jesus' Way—Our Way

THE MEDITATION:

One day Robert Browning was walking through the woods near Dulwich, England, when the thought flashed through his mind of the unconscious influence radiating from a single personality. He pictured to himself a person walking alone, a person so socially obscure that he seemed to leave no trace of his

passing, yet exercising a lasting influence. It was in such a fashion that Browning's well-known poem, "Pippa Passes" was borne. Perhaps you remember the story of the little Italian girl who goes up and down the hillside singing, "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world." The poet shows how the passing of this pure and innocent girl halts a pair of guilty lovers, stops an angry man seeking revenge against his enemy, causes a would-be assassin of the king to think again, and shames a worldly bishop into resisting a temptation to wickedness. Here is a lesson in influence! Who of us has ever stopped to realize that our lives, humble and insignificant as they may seem to be, are constantly exerting an influence. Whether the scales tip at good or evil depends in large measure upon those forces which find us weighing in the balance.

Jesus, Himself who is the way of Life, has shown us that to follow Him means abundant living. Likewise He has admonished us to so live that men will give great glory to God. Quite a responsibility, isn't it? Especially when it is so easy to assume that we have little or no influence on people, that what we do or say counts very little. But it is a false assumption! The next time we walk down Main Street, let us remember that we are exerting an unconscious influence on every person we pass. If we are somber or disheartened, our mood is transferred. While if we are smiling and happy, we are bound to lift the spirits of those who come our way. Years ago when money was being raised for the United China Relief, the story of a little girl is told who sent in a dollar as her contribution. A note which accompanied the gift said, "If you don't reach your quota, let me know." Just one dollar to help in meeting the needs of millions of people in war-torn China. And yet the story was told the length and breadth of this land, resulting in the raising of thousands of dollars all because of the unconscious generous impulse of one little girl.

In a similar fashion, the things we do and say make a lasting impression on our families, our friends, our neighbors. Let us, therefore, look well to our lives that they may count for Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life Eternal.

THE POEM :

May every soul that touches mine—
Be it the slightest contact—

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Get therefrom some good;
Some little grace; one kindly thought;
One aspiration yet unfelt;
One bit of courage
For the darkening sky;
One gleam of faith
One glimpse of brighter skies
Beyond the gathering mists—
To make this life worth while
And heaven a surer heritage.

—George Eliot

THE PRAYER:

Dear God, we thank Thee for sending Thy Son, Jesus, to make the way for us. Forgive us that we so often sing the songs and read the words that express our belief in Thy Kingdom, but we do not act as though we are a part of it. Forgive us for denying our faith in Thee and seeking to go the wrong way down a one-way street. Forgive us for saying that we will go with the Good News when we do not go or even declare it in our daily lives. Cleanse us of our selfishness and make our hearts and minds sensitive to the voice of Thy spirit as we strive to teach Thy way. And make us willing to accept Thy commission as disciples to be witnesses to Thy risen, loving Son, our Lord and King. In His name we pray. Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN: Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me

THE BENEDICTION:

May the love of God show in everything we say and do throughout the coming days. Amen.

From "I Am and Ye Are" by permission of Marion Van Horne

Decisions Crowd Me

Aims for This Program

1. To impress upon us the importance of the decisions we make.
2. To give us help on making right decisions.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 27:15-23

Have you ever seen a swimmer pause for a long time on the diving board, trying to make up his mind to dive? Maybe you wished you were right in back of him and could give him a healthy shove.

Many people today are like that diver—cautious, hesitant, unable to make up their minds. They are sitting on top of question marks. Shall I do as the crowd does or go it alone? Shall I drink or stay sober? Shall I gamble or remain honest? Shall I discard or keep these principles taught by my church?

Life Is Made Up of Decisions

One of the outstanding leaders of the Christian church in America said, "As parents, we helped our children make their decisions up until they were sixteen, but after that they were on their own." We have to learn how to make decisions, independent decisions, right decisions. Our parents can't travel around with us and decide for us. That wouldn't be right anyway. A part of the growing up process, achieving maturity, is learning how to make decisions on our own.

God has made us so that we are free, and a part of our freedom is the right to choose which way we

go. We are not jeeps, dependent on a driver, but we are free human beings with the power of choice.

Of course, for a few years while we're in the service, we've had to set aside some of our freedom. Uncle Sam orders us to a certain company, regulates the duties we are to do, and we had better not move until we get further orders. Even so, we are still free to use our leisure time, as we see fit, and the kind of person we become inside is of our own making.

There are three big decisions all of us are called upon to make: what will be our lifework, who will be our life mate, and where we will spend eternity. In other words, what will be my job, whom shall I marry, and what will I do with Christ?

Then, of course, there are hundreds of decisions we are called on to make day by day. What shall I do with my leisure time? Shall I drink? Shall I gamble? Shall I satisfy merely the physical? Thousands of similar questions.

Guiding Principles

We have reached a certain point in life. We can't go back and relive life. However, we can

check up on ourselves now to see if we're going in the right direction. And we can redirect our lives. Here is the wonderful truth of the Christian religion—Jesus Christ took men who had traveled the wrong way and set their feet upon the right path.

Yes, and he took men who had been living almost meaningless lives and gave them a great purpose for which to live. Jesus said to these men, "Follow me." James and John left their nets; Levi got up from his tax collector's seat; and Saul stopped his persecuting. They became different men and went out and transformed the world.

That's the first step in making Christian decisions—decide for Christ.

The next steps follow. Actually they all come under the general question, "What would Christ have me do?" Look at how Jesus made decisions. Everything really centered around God. God was at the center and Jesus did everything with reference to God's will.

To be sure, it isn't always easy to know God's will. That calls for Bible study, for prayer, and for intelligence illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

The following four questions concerning decisions may help us:

1. What will this course of action do to my personality? Will it harm me or help me? Will it warp me, or make me more genial, more gracious?

2. Is this a reasonable course of action? As I think it through, where does it lead? Does it lead me away from the church or closer to it?

3. Is this a course of action, I'd be willing for everyone to adopt? Would I be willing for it to become a universal law?

4. Is this in keeping with the moral laws of God? The Ten Commandments have never been repealed. We can be sure God is on the side of right.

In these four questions, there are four principles embodied.

1. Do the thing that will build up your body and your character, not tear them down. PERSONALITY.

2. Do the thing that is reasonable. RATIONALITY.

3. Do the thing you'd be willing for everyone else to do. UNIVERSALITY.

4. Do the thing that is in keeping with the moral laws of God. REALITY.

If we adopt some set of principles like these for our life, we won't forever have to be sitting on top of a question mark. Judging quickly every issue that comes up, we can make the Christian decision and go on from there.

Take drinking alcoholic liquors, for example—do they build up your body or tear it down?

Take stealing as another example—would you be willing for everybody to steal?

Take immorality—how about those words of Jesus, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God?"

Keeping Steady

Of course, it is easier to sit on the sidelines and say, "Do right," than it is to do right out there on the firing line of today's world. But doing right most of the time certainly is possible.

Recall Jesus on the "Mount of Temptation." Three times he turned the tempter back. God was at the center of his life and spiritual things were paramount. *He took the hard right against the easy wrong.* And throughout the days of his ministry, he stood by these decisions!

It is a good thing to make up our minds here and now that we'll be consistent Christians, living a godly life even in the midst of an ungodly environment. Others will respect us. Don't think we have to live down to the level of our environment. We can set an example for others to follow.

And the wonderful thing is—God promises to help us. For one thing, as Paul says, God will not suffer you to be tempted beyond your ability to bear it, and he will with the temptation provide a way of escape. *Look* for that way of escape. Don't mess around with sin just to see how strong you are.

Again, you have prayer. When temptation assails you, quietly

Questions for Discussion

1. Think back over your lives. What have been some of the big decisions you've made? Do you still think they were the right decisions?

2. What factors helped you make right decisions? What hindered you from making right decisions?

3. Read Matthew 27:15-23. What decision was Pilate called on to make? What is your answer to Pilate's question?

4. If you've made a wrong decision, what can you do about it?

5. Under what circumstances should decisions be changed?

and quickly breathe a prayer to God asking him for help. He has promised to strengthen us. "Lo, I am with you always," said Jesus.

Without him we cannot succeed—we cannot make right decisions. Human wisdom is not enough. But with him, we cannot fail.

Prayer

O God, many of us keep searching for some new method, for some new science, for some new books, for some new art, for some new spiritual guide, to enable us to cast off the cable that holds us securely snugged to the dock of self-absorption. O dear Lord, melt the ice of complexity that encases our hearts. O God, may we learn . . . that Christ has done for us the one thing needful and that what remains for us to do is not an art or a science but a fierce enough heart-hunger to let go, to cast cable, and to bind our hearts to Thee by the strongest bonds that time or eternity have ever known—by the hunger of our heart's core for Thee. In our Saviour's name. Amen.

Christ and My Crowd

Aims for This Program

1. To help us to see ourselves as social beings and to learn to accept our social responsibility as Christians.
2. To help us to achieve sufficient Christian maturity to make our crowd more Christian.
3. To help us discover the values that come from fellowship with a small group.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 13:31-33; Matthew 26:69-75

The "p r i v a t e" is wrongly named. There's nothing private about a private's life. Come to think of it, there's not much privacy about anybody's life anymore. Everywhere people and crowds, more and more people every year. Tomorrow morning in America there'll be fifty thousand more babies. The population is increasing at a faster pace than ever before.

Man Is a Social Being

There may be a problem here for you to consider sometime—whether the world's population is growing too fast for the world's food supply. But not at this moment. We want to think now about Christ and the crowd.

Immediately we see that man is a social being. Of course, a few people in the world's history have tried to get away from other people to live alone, but not many. We are born into a family. There are other people around us, father, mother, and often brothers and sisters. We learn to share. We learn the joys of comradeship. We see that "I" is related to "we."

Then we begin to play with

other children our own age down the street. We go to school and the crowd increases. Sometimes we find it tough going for some of the crowd buck us and we get into arguments. But we also make friends, and it is wonderful to share some of the deepest feelings of our lives with these friends.

Out from among the crowd there emerges someone of the opposite sex that we like a little better than the rest. So we have a sweetheart and we begin to dream of a family of our own. Maybe that's already started for you. Perhaps not, and it is still a good dream to be realized later on.

When you started to Sunday School, you became a part of a crowd that was busy trying to get to know the Bible better. If you gave your life to Christ and joined the church, you became a part of a crowd that was seeking together to help Christ realize his prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Now, in military service you are a part of a crowd that seeks to preserve our democratic way of

life. You have little to say about the crowd you live with most of the time. There are other times, however, when you're on pass or leave, when you do choose your crowd. And, too, even now your close friends in the barracks or aboard ship are those of your own choosing.

From all of this, you see that we do have to live with others. As a matter of fact, we'd be very lonely, very unhappy, very self-centered if we didn't have the crowd around.

Changing the Crowd

As a part of the crowd, your attitude may be simply to do what the crowd does. That's known as a crowd-dominated life or morality. The crowd drinks, curses, plays fast and loose with Christian principles and so you do it.

Or you decide that since you are an individual person, you'll live as you feel under God you should live, regardless of the crowd. That's personal morality, God-centered living. This doesn't mean that you're "goody-goody," but simply that you have convictions and you're going to stick by them. It is this kind of living that men respect. They may not pat you on the back, but deep down they respect you, and one by one, if you confront your crowd with the claims of the Christian way, you can win.

There are amazing stories of how one, two, or three dedicated persons have changed a whole crowd. Here's a distinguished woman in a southern city who became concerned about the race question and quietly has brought about a more Christian attitude.

Here are two or three young men on a college campus who've led many other young people back to church. Not by pious talk, but by being truly Christian and setting an example. Here's a young supply sergeant who by his clean living has won the respect of his whole company and has led some of them at least to start going to chapel.

That Special Crowd

Regardless of whatever crowd we may be thrown with, as Christians we need at times a special crowd. We need a few close Christian friends with whom we can talk, study, pray, and have fellowship. Look around you. You'll discover others like yourself. Get them into your group. (If you are a fellow reading this on a base where there is no organized group, talk it over with the fellows and the chaplain, send to the United Fellowship office for a kit of materials and get a group started. Have the chaplain order copies of *The Link* for all the fellows. Decide upon a regular meeting time and get together often.)

Don't let your crowd simply spend its time in talk, but develop a program of action. Decide upon Christian ways to present the claims of Christ and his church to all the men around you.

Don't be discouraged if your group is small. Remember when Christianity began there were only Christ and the Twelve. Jesus compared it to a mustard seed—the smallest of seeds whose tender plant grew into the tallest of all trees. Or, he said it was like a small bit of yeast or leaven put

Questions for Discussion

1. What happens to the person who shuts himself off from others—who insists on living alone?

2. When should one go with the crowd and when buck it?

3. What is the difference between crowd-dominated morality and individual morality? Which is better?

4. Read Matthew 13:31-32 and explain the parable. Read and explain also Matthew 13:33.

5. What did Simon Peter do in the crowd? (Matthew 26:69-75.)

into the dough and slowly it permeated that dough until it all was leavened. God has chosen the small things of this world to confound the mighty.

Yours is the master's minority movement. Wherever God rules, there is the kingdom of God. If he rules in your heart, the kingdom of God is there. If he rules in your group, no matter how small, the kingdom of God is there. And we are helping to hasten the day when the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Make Me a Captive, Lord

George Matheson

Make me a captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand;
Imprison me within Thine arms,
And strong shall be my hand.

My heart is weak and poor
Until it master find;
It has no spring of action sure—
It varies with the wind.
It cannot freely move
Till Thou hast wrought its chain;
Enslave it with Thy matchless love,
And deathless it shall reign.

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My will is not my own
Till Thou hast made it Thine;
If it would reach a monarch's throne
It must its crown resign;
It only stands unbent
Amid the clashing strife,
When on Thy bosom it has leant
And found in Thee its life.

The Christ of My Bible

Aims for This Program

1. To review what we learn about Christ from the Bible.
2. To encourage us to read the Bible more, to make a greater place for it in our daily living.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Luke 2; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; John 14:6-9;
2 Corinthians 5:19; Ephesians 1:7

Without doubt, the Bible is the greatest book ever written. And in the Bible we read the story of the greatest person who ever lived—Jesus Christ. Ours is a Christian nation, and almost all of us are Christians. At the very heart of our Christianity is Christ. It is *Christ-ianity*. But what are our ideas of Christ? Where do our concepts of Christ come from? What do we believe about him? These are appropriate questions. You may remember on one occasion Jesus himself asked this question of the religious people of his day: "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42).

I suspect that a good many of us base our answers on what we've heard from other people about Jesus Christ. Actually, if we want the true picture, we need to go back to the Bible, for the Bible contains the oldest writings about Jesus. In the Four Gospels and in the letters of Paul we have word pictures of Jesus by members of the earliest churches. Has your picture of Christ come from these New Testament books? Maybe we need to turn again to the Bible and read it diligently to

discover our picture of Jesus.

Start with the Gospel of Mark. Did you know that it takes only fifty minutes to read the book through? That is less time than it takes to read many short stories in the modern magazines.

In general, today there are two views about Jesus Christ. One is that he was a great and good man, a teacher of Israel who taught many fine things about how to live. The other is that he was sent from God to be the Savior of the world and that he is more than a good man—he is man's divine redeemer. This latter view has been the concept of historic Christianity.

Here is what I find as I read the New Testament, but check these by your own reading:

1. Jesus came into the world in an unusual way. "And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths" (Luke 2:7). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). Read the stories of the birth of Jesus in Luke 2 and Matthew 2. Bishop Gore has well said: "What was needed was a fresh start for humanity. God gave it that fresh start in Jesus."

2. Jesus lived an unusual life. He went about doing good. He was like his Good Samaritan, binding up the aching wounds of humanity. In him we see courage, truth, honesty, purity, love—all lived out, not just talked about. Pilate said of him: "I find no crime in this man" (Luke 23:4). That is man's universal testimony. No evil thoughts ever seemed to enter his mind. He did nothing which was unbecoming. Whenever temptation assailed him, he won the victory over it. In other words, I feel that he cannot be explained in human terms. Surely he was the divine son of God.

Stanley Jones was right when he wrote: "The lips of the world are dumb and silent before the question of finding anything better. In the realm of character, Jesus has the field."

3. He died a sacrificial death. It was the death of Jesus that was most important to the early church. Two-thirds of the Gospels are devoted to the account of his trial and death. Paul emphasized again and again the meaning of his death. It has been pointed out that this sentence from 1 Corinthians was the key to early Christian theology: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3). *Christ died for us!* There it is—the innocent for the guilty! This is the atonement. Much ink has been spilled in the history of the church seeking to explain it. However, in simple terms, it is simply that by his death Jesus did something for us that we cannot do for ourselves.

We accept this redeeming act by faith. We don't earn our salvation; he obtained it for us. We simply receive it as a matter of grace.

4. He arose from the grave. He is the living Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:4, Paul wrote, "that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures." Each of the Gospels tells how Christ arose, how he was seen by the early disciples, how their despondency after his death was turned to joy when they realized he was still alive. Indeed, the church would not have begun had it not been for the resurrection. Men don't celebrate defeats; they celebrate victories. The change of the day of worship from the seventh day, the Sabbath, to the first day, Sunday, is a recognition of the resurrection.

5. Christ is the revealer of God. Two words point up the great mission of Jesus—revealer and redeemer. He was the revealer of God and redeemer of men. If we want to know what God is like, we find our answer in Jesus Christ. God is truth, love, purity, goodness, and courage. How do we know? We see all of these things in Jesus. John tells of a conversation of Jesus with Philip in which Jesus says: "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). And Paul comments, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

6. Christ is the redeemer of men. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). As sinners, we greatly need this redemption. We are like straws on the edge of the whirl-

pool, with the possibility every moment of being sucked in by the swirling waters of a pagan way of life. Only God through Christ can save us.

Now these great truths and others come to us from the Word of God. So we need to turn more often to the Bible for light upon Christ and for divine truth. Of course, many people say, "We are too busy to read the Bible." If we are too busy to read the Bible, go to church, or to pray, we are too busy! All of us have the same amount of time. It is what we do with time that counts.

So set aside some time out of each day to read the Bible and pray. Put a copy of the New Testament in a modern version into your pocket and read when you have some leisure moments. We

Questions for Discussion

1. Where do our concepts of Christ usually come from? How did they come to you? How many came from the Bible?
2. List the important events of the life of Christ of which the Bible tells us? What is the significance of each event?
3. In what ways does Jesus reveal God?
4. How does he redeem men?
5. Suggest ways we can find more time to read the Bible.

do get done the things we really want to get done. We are building a storehouse of Christian truth that will bless us all our lives, if we turn regularly and reverently to the Bible.

Transforming Power

Ruskin in his writing, *Modern Painters*, tells us that the black soil from a foot path in the outskirts of a manufacturing town, the absolute type of impurity, is composed of four elements: clay, mixed with soot, a little sand, and water. Those four may be separated from each other and amazingly transformed under the law of its unity.

The clay particles become a clear, hard substance that can deal with light in a wonderful way and gather out of it the loveliest blue rays only, refusing the rest. We call it, then, the sapphire.

Similarly the sand is rearranged under the law of its transformation and becomes the opal.

The soot becomes the hardest thing in the world, and for its blackness it obtains the power of reflecting all the rays of the sun in the most vivid blaze any solid thing can shoot. It is then called a diamond.

Last of all the water sprinkled on the morning grass becomes a dew drop glistening in the sun, or else a crystalline star of snow.

In a much higher way the Lord takes us—impure, having no good in ourselves—and places us in the sunlight of Him who is the Sun of Righteousness. He transforms us into the likeness of Himself—Jewels in His Crown!

—MELVIN A. HAMMARBERG

Prayer To Whom?

Aims for This Program

1. To discover for ourselves new meaning in prayer.
2. To learn how to address our prayers and what it means to pray in Jesus' name.
3. To realize anew the effectiveness of prayer.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:5-15; 7:22; 18:29; 28:19; John 14:14; 16:23; Acts 2:21; Philippians 2:21; 1 John 2:12.

Who can measure the importance of prayer? Richard Roberts has said, "The most important thing a man can do in the course of a day is offer a prayer." It is more important than making a million dollars; more important than becoming President of the United States; more important than getting discharged from the service.

It has also been said that "religion, whenever it is vital, is primarily prayer." "The man of prayer is the only one whose opinion is worth anything in the realm of religion."

Mahatma Gandhi was once asked, "Who is the man who will lift the world out of its bog?" Gandhi replied, "I don't know him by name, but let me say that he will be a man who is conscious of God twenty-four hours a day." The man who has that kind of God-consciousness is a man of prayer.

What Is Prayer?

But what is prayer? "Prayer is the meeting of two spirits—I and 'I Am.'" "Prayer is the soul's sin-

cere desire, unuttered or expressed." "Prayer is turning the prose of thought into the poetry of praise." "Prayer is conversation with God."

It seems to me that this latter definition is the easiest to understand and the most accurate. Prayer is conversation in fellowship with God. Prayer is not merely asking God for things. To be sure, some people think of God as a kind of Santa Claus and through prayer we send him our Christmas lists, so to speak.

There are at least five elements in prayer—adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication, and submission. We pray homage to God as sovereign of the universe. We confess our sin. We thank God for the many blessings he sends us. We seek those things we need. And we submit our wills to the will of God. All these elements are involved in prayer.

In the Name of Jesus

But to whom should we pray when we pray? Notice the prayers of others at chapel, at home, and in other religious groups. To

whom do people pray? Some pray to God. Some pray to Jesus. Some pray to Mary. Generally, however, those you hear, pray to God, perhaps in the name of Jesus. And that is the way we should pray. For if prayer is conversation with God then it is God to whom we must speak.

Many prayers which begin "Our Father" close with the words "In Jesus' name, Amen." Why do we pray in Jesus' name? For one thing, Jesus said, "If you ask anything in my name, I will do it" (John 14:14). Early Christians prophesied, did mighty works, cast out demons, baptized—all in the name of Christ.

In those days power was associated with the name of the deity. Among the Hebrews, God and his name became inseparable. Later, God was so revered that the use of his name was forbidden. Since Jesus was the divine Son of God, early Christians spoke his name only with a sense of reverence and awe. Whatever was asked or done in the name of Jesus was something very sacred.

For another thing, Jesus was the one who had come to reveal God to men and bring men to God. He stood, therefore, between man and God as a mediator. It was therefore perfectly appropriate to approach God through Jesus. Paul speaks of Jesus' being raised from the dead "who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us" (Rom. 8:34).

Is Prayer Effective?

Perhaps the most important question we ask about prayer is,

Questions for Discussion

1. Give your own definition of prayer.
2. To whom do you address your prayers? Why do we pray to God in Jesus' name?
3. What effect does prayer have? Tell of some of your own experiences of answered prayer.
4. Look up Matthew 6:5-15 and find these three things Jesus says about prayer: Pray sincerely, pray secretly, pray simply.
5. What is the best time of the day for you to pray?

Is prayer effective? Albert Schweitzer says that asking God for things is the lowest form of prayer. When we consider this type of prayer alone, we must admit that God does not grant every one of our requests. Even on a human basis, a father does not meet all the demands of his child. On the other hand, how wrong it would be for a child to converse with his father only when he is seeking to get something.

Yet God does often grant our requests. Any person who comes seriously and honestly to God and prays, "God be merciful to me a sinner and save me from my sin," will find God answering that prayer. But if we pray for an automobile, the situation may be different. A little girl prayed that it wouldn't rain on the day of the picnic. It rained torrents. A little skeptic boy said, "Aha! You see, God didn't answer your prayer." "Oh, yes he did," replied the little girl, "he said no!"

"He Leadeth Me"

Aims for This Program

1. To challenge us to surrender our lives to Christ and to help us see what that means.
2. To show how surrender to Christ helps man to be more fully free.
3. To show what changes come to us when we do surrender to Christ.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE: Matthew 8:18-22; Ephesians 4

A cartoon showed two or three men in a rubber raft on a restless sea. They had apparently been forced down from a plane and here they were drifting to and fro hoping for deliverance. Underneath the cartoon was the inscription, "Are you, too, at sea?" There are a good many people at sea today. They are sailing in a sea of doubt, despair, and death. A modern poem supposedly improves upon the old poem we memorized in high school, "I shot an arrow into the air." Here it is now:

"I fired a missile into the air,
It fell to earth I know not where,
But with assurance I can swear,
The place it struck's no longer there!"

Psychologists tell us that we must have *something* to control our minds, to give us integration. Christianity says: We must have *someone* to control our lives. So, first of all, Christianity calls for a decision. What will you do with Jesus Christ?

Challenge to Decision

We looked briefly at this a few Sundays ago when we discussed "Decisions Crowd Me." There is the story of a woman who stalled at a busy street intersection as the traffic lights continued to change—red, yellow, green, red, yellow, green, on and on. The traffic officer stepped beside her car and yelled, "What's the matter, lady? Ain't we got any colors you like?" The answer was not easy for the lady. There comes a time when we have to make up our minds.

In the New Testament, there is a very beautiful story recounting how Jesus was just about to cross the Sea of Galilee in a boat when two young men came up to him. The first said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." In other words, you've made a wise decision, young man, but the going will be rough. It will not be easy.

The other young man said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." But Jesus countered,

"Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead." That is to say, let nothing come before me in your life. Put me first. The times call for such a decision now.

This decision for Christ is to be whole-hearted. We are to seek first the kingdom of God. Like the shoe man in St. Louis, we are to say, "God first; family second; shoes third." These are extraordinary times and nothing short of a whole-hearted surrender to Christ is going to make much difference in our world.

A young Christian Chinese who was converted to communism wrote to Elton Trueblood, "I send you my revolutionary love." Christianity must evoke that kind of love among its youth—in you and you and you. Christ calls for unconditional surrender.

But We Are Still Persons

Does this unconditional surrender mean that we lose our freedom? No. We are still free-will creatures. But freedom does not mean license. The train is not free to travel the murky swamp. It must stay on the rails if it is to run smoothly. We must let our lives be controlled by the God of the universe and the one who came to reveal God to us. Left to our own ways, we are bound to drift; we become victims of our passions, our emotions; we live selfishly; and we flounder in despair.

Why turn ourselves over to Jesus as did the young man who said, "Teacher I will follow you wherever you go"? Well, for one thing, because he knows more about us than we know about ourselves. He knows our strength and

weakness. He knows the plan we are to fulfill in the purposes of God. He knows that we are spiritual beings who live for eternity and not material creatures that live only for the moment.

Now Christ does not force us to do that which is against our will. He does not ask us to destroy the self, our own precious personality. Indeed, living a surrendered life means more self-fulfillment than self-denial. We realize our highest powers. We accomplish greater deeds. We make the world a better place to live.

For the Christian, life is like a triangle. The three sides are self, others, and God. (Remember the story of the lopsided triangle in the December issue?) Self is there and it is important. Like the lad with the five loaves and two fishes, we find that we have multiplied our usefulness when we dedicate ourselves to Christ. But self does not achieve its highest fulfillment if we run roughshod over others. Nor are we able to build a life that counts unless we build it with God.

Changes Will Come

There is a poem which says, "I wish there were some wonderful place called the land of beginning again." Well, there is! We can all begin again with Christ. That's what surrender to Christ really means—we begin again.

For one thing, we become concerned about others. We do not live for self alone, but for others. In Ephesians, Paul tells us, "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph.

Questions for Discussion

1. How would you characterize the people you know today—happy, disillusioned, confused, bewildered, poised—what?

2. What do you think will bring more happiness and more poise to the world?

3. We speak of "surrender to Christ." Does he have a right to ask this? Why or why not? What is meant by this surrender?

4. We say man is a free creature. How can surrender to Christ keep from destroying freedom or help man to be more free?

5. What changes ought to show up after a person gives himself completely to Jesus Christ?

4:32). That is the attitude of the Christian.

For another thing, we are making a better world. Around us everywhere there are things which need changing. It was said

of the early Christians, "These are they who have turned the world upside down." Our Christian influence reaches out to others in the barracks or ship. We are not priggish, or self-righteous, but quietly and kindly we live as Christ taught us to live, and that makes a difference. Others see us as we choose the right, and so our influence is positively Christian.

We must help others to learn that this new world men seek does not come through science, through education, through human betterment, but through Christ and his way of life. What would you think of the doctor who had a cure for cancer and did not share it with others so the world might be rid of this terrible disease? We have the cure to the disease of sin in Christ and it is our privilege and duty to share it with others.

That message should be upon our lips and in our lives that "Christ is the hope of the world."

MAKING DECISIONS

You are facing a dilemma; you are not quite sure which of two decisions to make. Apply the test of universality. Suppose your personal decision should become a universal custom, would it bring the world happiness or unhappiness?

—JOSEPH R. SIZOO

A
BIBLE READING
FOR
EVERY DAY
OF THE MONTH



BY
JAMES V. CLAYPOOL
Secy., promotion of
Bible Use,
American Bible
Society

THEME: Enrollment in God's Service Forces

1	Christ as Leader	Matthew 4:12-22
2	God's Gifts and Ours	Matthew 10:1-15
3	Biblical Prudence	Matthew 10:16-23
4	Numbered in the Divine Roll Call	Matthew 10:24-41
5	The Law of Self-Denial	Matthew 16:21-28
6	The Law of Service	Matthew 20:20-28
7	John the Baptist Preaches	Luke 3:1-23
8	A Compassionate Officer	Luke 7:1-10
9	When There's Love at Home	Luke 7:36-50
10	What Harvest Will You Bring?	Luke 8:1-25
11	What Evil Spirits Have You?	Luke 8:26-56
12	How Prayer Is Answered	Luke 11:1-13
13	Inward Strength from God	Luke 11:33-42
14	Maturity in and from Jesus	Luke 13:1-17
15	Christ the Foundation Stone	Luke 13:18-35
16	A Lesson Guests Need	Luke 14:1-14
17	The World Christian Community	Luke 14:15-35
18	Finding Unity in This Life	Luke 16:1-13
19	Beyond the Call of Duty	Luke 17:1-21
20	The Peril of Self-Satisfaction	Luke 18:9-30
21	Questions from a Fault-finder	Luke 20:9-26
22	Used by God	John 6:1-14
23	The Bread of Life	John 6:41-51
24	Live Indeed in Deeds	John 12:32-43
25	Saved Forever	John 17:1-13
26	The World Church	John 17:14-26
27	Fellowship in the Gospel	Philippians 1:1-11
28	The Source of All Good Gifts	James 1:16-27
29	Knowledge That Is Wise	James 3:13-18
30	Why Do Christians Show Love?	1 John 4:1-11
31	Can We Punish Evil in Love?	1 John 4:12-21



A little girl went to church with her mother for the first time. She was awed by the place, and interested in everything around her. When the congregation knelt, she asked what the people were doing.

Mother whispered, "They are saying their prayers, dear."

The little girl looked around in amazement, and again turned to her mother inquiringly: "Saying their prayers with all their clothes on?"

"What is the shortest perceptible unit of time?"

"The period between the moment a traffic light changes and the time the boob behind you blows his horn."

A saintly looking old fellow was running to catch his bus.



"I figure what's the use of buying new clothes. I'm going to be drafted soon."

Just as he appeared to be winning the race, the bus driver, with a fiendish smirk, pulled away from the curb and the wheels splashed a shower of muddy water over the old man.

Softly, this kindly one murmured, "May his soul find peace." Still more softly he added, "And the sooner the better."

The retiring old usher was instructing his youthful successor in the details of his office. "And always remember, my boy, that we have nothing but good, kind Christians in this church until you try to put someone else in their pew."

A small boy, visiting New York City for the first time, went in an elevator to the top of the Empire State Building. As he shot past the 62nd floor at breath-taking speed, he gulped, turned to his father and asked, "Daddy, does God know we're coming?"



Professor: "Er—My dear, what's the meaning of this vase of flowers on the table today?"

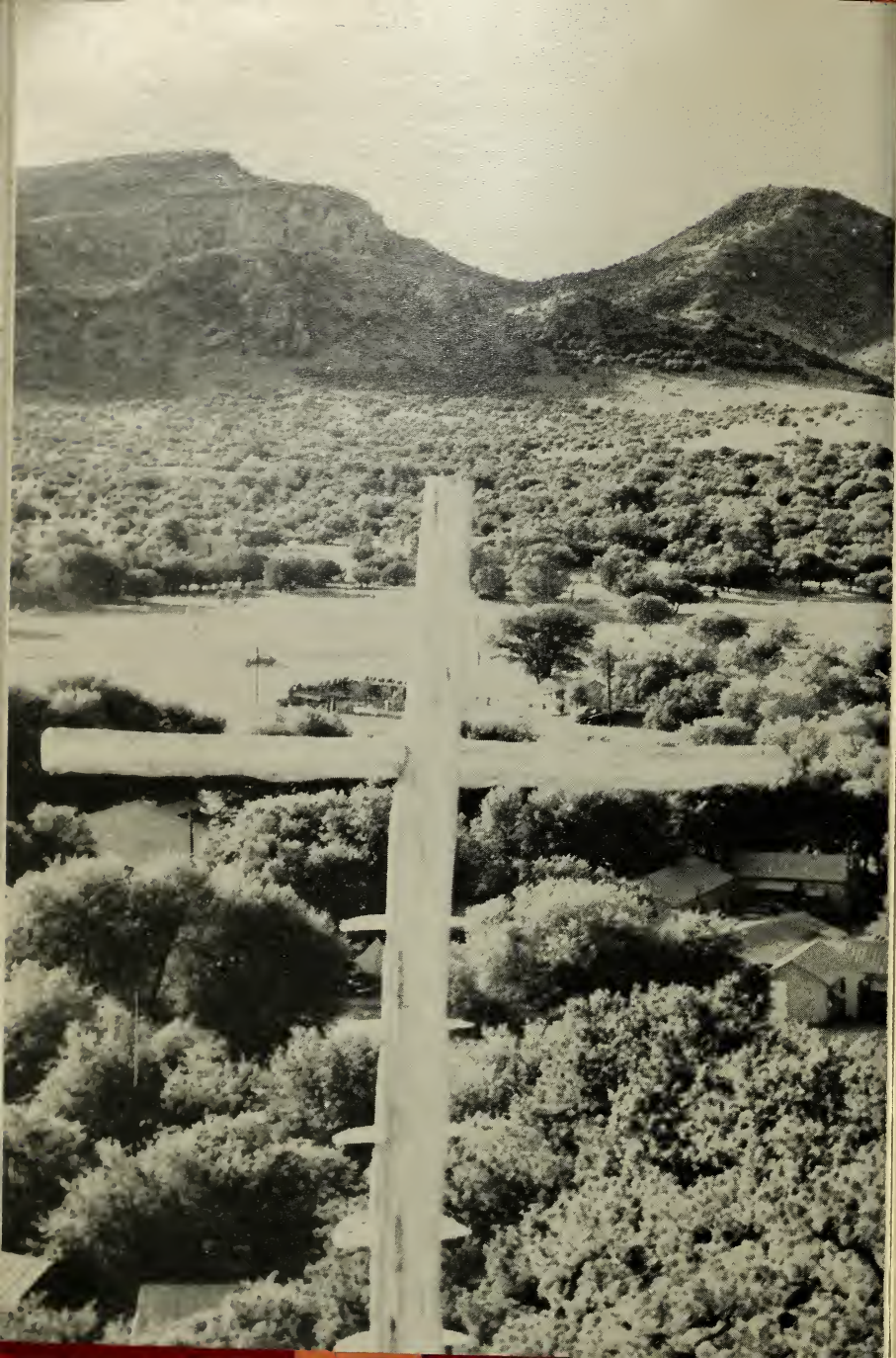
Wife: "Meaning? Why, today is your wedding anniversary."

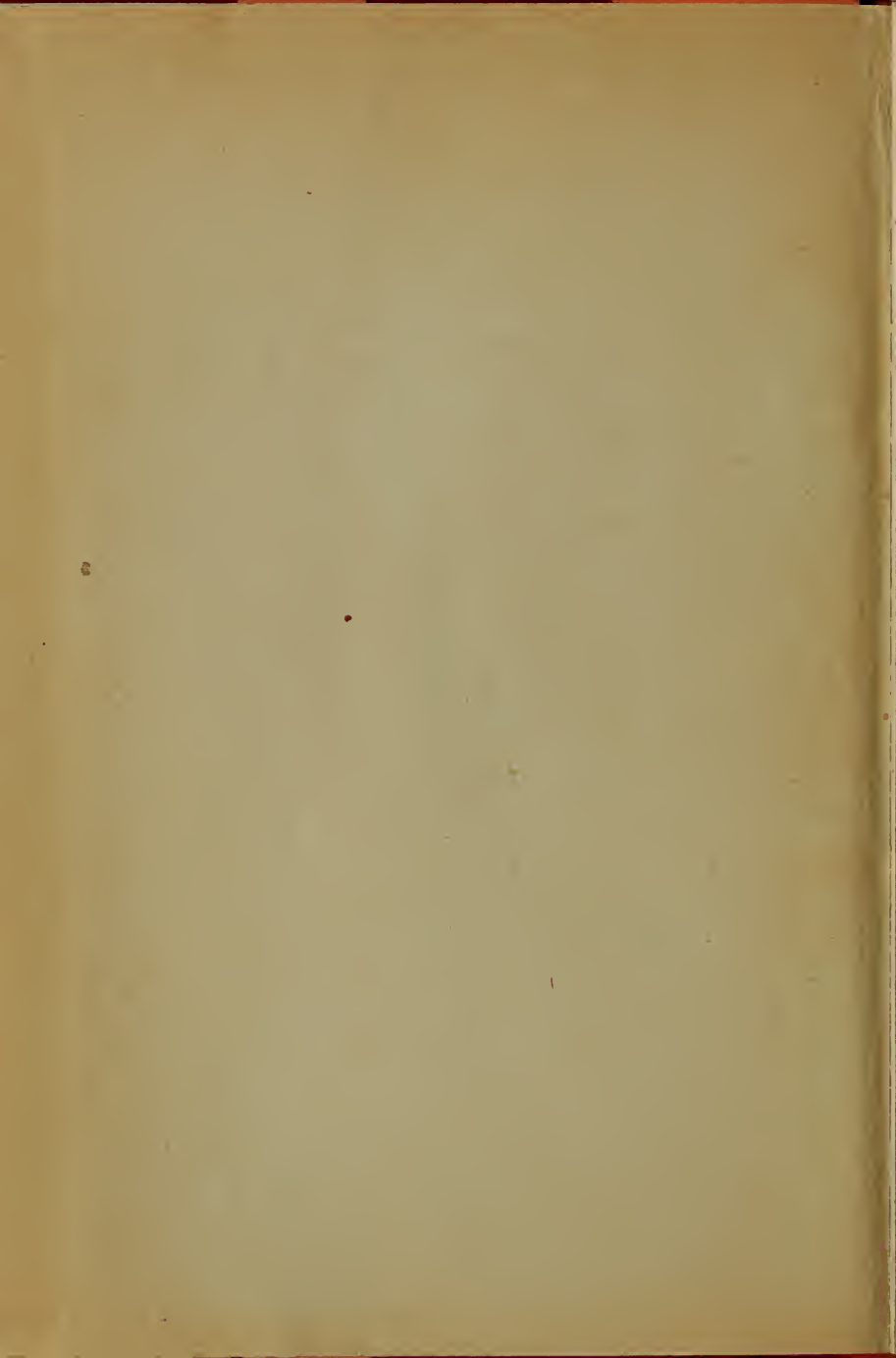
Professor: "Indeed! Well, well, do let me know when yours is so I may do the same for you."

The Covers

Between the South American countries of Argentina and Chile, in an area of the Andean La Cumbre Pass, 14,000 feet above sea level, stands the famous statue, the Christ of the Andes (front cover). This 26-foot statue, erected in 1904, is a symbol of the peaceful relationship now existing between the two nations. Four years before its erection, these countries were on the verge of war because of a disputed mountain boundary. But the people of both countries wanted peace. Led by two Roman Catholic bishops they crusaded for arbitration, and finally the legislatures of both nations agreed to allow the King of England to be the neutral arbitrator. The King, in conference with jurists and geographers, set up a boundary, dividing the disputed territory. Both Argentina and Chile agreed on the division. Relations between them grew more peaceful as time advanced, and there was great international feeling on both sides when Argentine Sculptor Mateo Alonso completed the statue which had been proposed years earlier by one of the bishops crusading for peace. The plaque at the base of the statue states: 'Sooner shall these mountains crumble into dust than Chile and Argentina break the peace to which they have sworn at the feet of Christ the Redeemer.'

The cross on the back cover marks the site of the annual Bloys Cowboy Camp Meeting in a valley of the Davis Mountains in Texas (see article on page 14).





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